"Intellectual Center of the Army"

COIN LESSONS LEARNED

Presented at:

The Counterinsurgency Leaders' Workshop

(28 October 2009)

US Army/USMC COIN Center (http://coin.army.mil)

LTC Storm Savage (Chief Counterinsurgency Integration)

Agenda

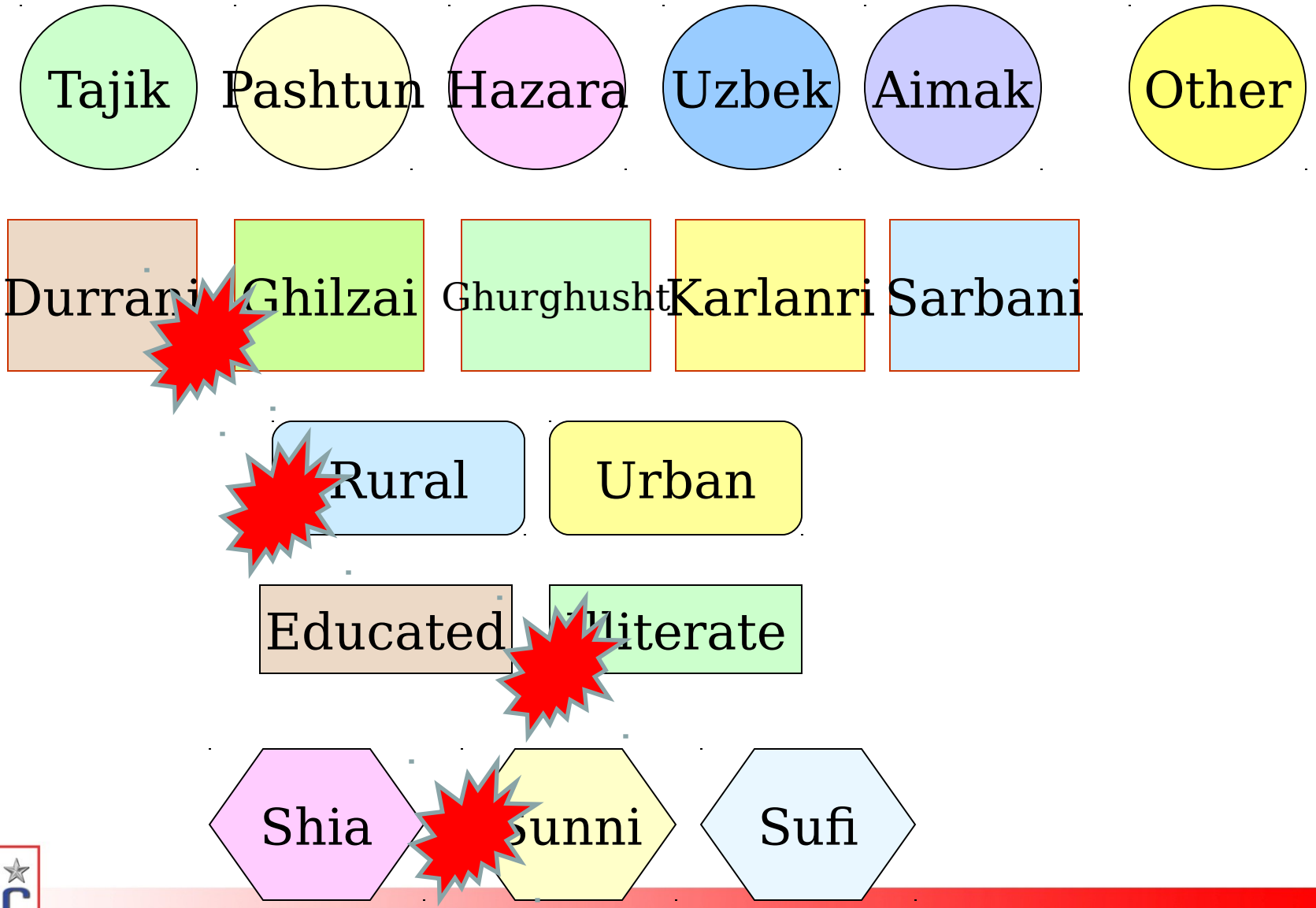
- **Recent Lessons Learned Afghanistan**
- **Paradoxes of COIN**
- **Observations Brief**

Pashtun Culture is a culture of permanent insurgency because of Pashtunwali ("The Way of the Pashtun")

- Equality
- Nang
- Badal
- Nanawatey
- Malmastia

"Kill one enemy, make ten"

Historical Lessons Learned



Twelve Culture Questions

1. Who founded the country? Who brought it to its modern form?
2. *What is customary during greeting and departing (shake hands, kiss, and bowing)?*
3. What typically defines a community or neighborhoods, for example, economic, ethnic, tribal, religious, or political traits? Where are the neighborhood boundaries?
4. *What is the role of religious leaders within the society?*
5. How do the people receive information? Radio, TV, newspaper, meetings, word of mouth)?
6. *What civil and human rights do the populace hold most sacred?*
7. How respected is military service in the culture? How are veterans treated?
8. *Do the people identify themselves with organizations or affiliations (tribes, religions, ethnicity, provinces/regions, classes, occupations, and common language)?*
9. How do they correct social mistakes?
10. What are their favorite holidays, and how do they celebrate them? What types of food do they eat during holidays and special occasions?
11. *Who or what do people fear?*
12. What is the country recognized for inventing or discovering? What do the people generally believe their country invented or discovered?

Lessons Learned: Afghanistan

- **Politics & security is local.** Empower leaders – *de facto* government -- with understanding the basics of **local governance.**
  - Need to shift emphasis to local leaders
  - Need to develop local leadership
- **However,** Constant tension between local Shiras/Militias and National GIRA/ANSF becomes a double edged sword.
- Trying to impose Government on/in a place that does not want that form of government becomes even more difficult.

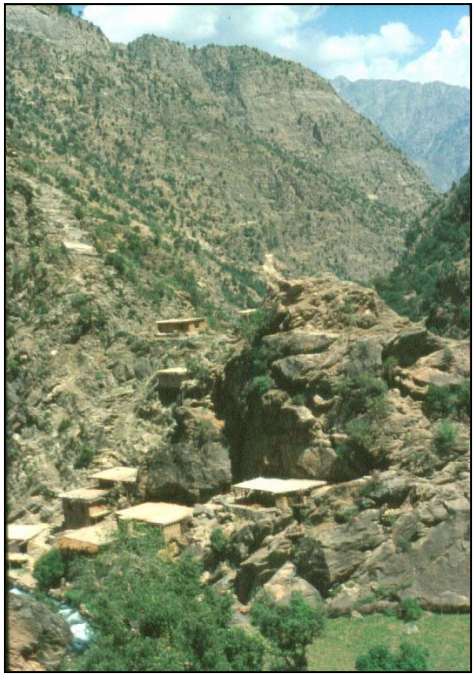
Local security provided by *local* security forces supported by *local* population to achieve "Sustainable Security."
GEN Petraeus

Lessons Learned: Afghanistan

Figure 4.3
Insurgent Targets, 2002–2006

Lessons Learned: Afghanistan

- Insurgency focused in mountainous/rural areas
  - Reconstruction has been centered on urban centers
- Over 50% of reconstruction spending has occurred in Kabul
- Few PRTs in rural areas only 23% of pop is urban 77% Rural
- $5 per yr per Afghan spent on in-country ai



Lessons Learned: Afghanistan

- Coalition Forces have made promises that we haven't kept – reconstruction – this greatly contributes to sense of frustration in the countryside.
  - Lack of GIRoA action
  - Man on the moon syndrome
- Influence of IRoA ends where the blacktop ends.
  - Movement of troops/resources
  - Less roads in the whole of Afghanistan than in the city of Ottawa

Lessons Learned: Afghanistan

- **We are too road-centric; stealing pages from Russian playbook:**
  - **Heavy road bound vehicle**
  - **Clear by fires**
  - **Clinging to FOBs**

Lessons Learned: Afghanistan

- Coalition Forces not arrayed to protect the Afghan populace.
- Numerous FOBs and COPs on poorly selected terrain outside of built up areas.
- Coalition forces most successful where they have lived amongst the people and gained their confidence.
- Bn level cordon and search ops are not as effective as ta
  o

"They have the watches, but we have the time"

Taliban saying

Lessons Learned: Afghanistan

- **Secure areas established and expanded (think ink spot).**

Conventional military forces *reoriented* for COIN.

Isolate the insurgents from the population (population control).

How we help the Afghan people win

Seek out the underprivileged, disenfranchised,

If you want to know what is not working, talk to the poor.

Lessons Learned: Afghanistan

- Medical clinics very effective.
  - *Brings good intelligence from locals*
  - *Women needed for clinics*
- HUMINT brought most intelligence.
- NDS very good at intelligence.

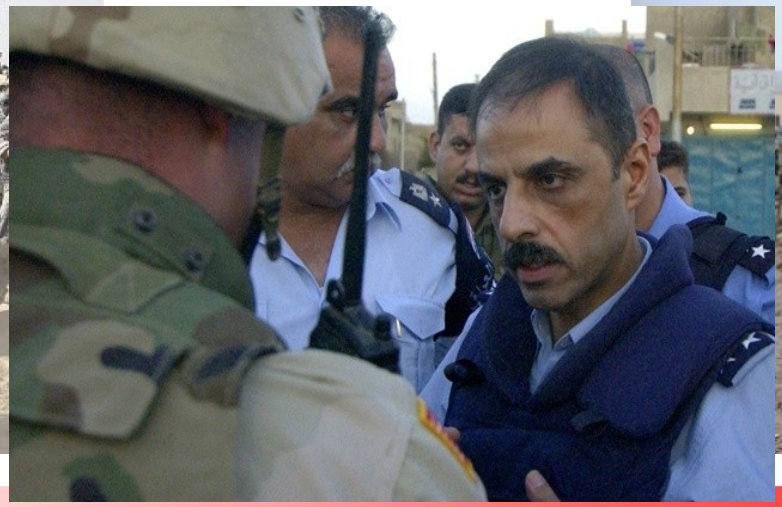
Amnesty and Rehabilitation for Insurgents

Lessons Learned: Afghanistan

- **Leader Development.** Critical thinkers who empower subordinates with intelligence, logistics, guidance, & authority to aggressively execute operations in very complex environment.
- General purpose troops now fulfilling *traditional* SF role.
  - Junior leaders need freedom of action in line with SF
- All units need to be COIN trained before going into theater

Lessons Learned: Afghan Advising

- Operations conducted with ANSF/ANA/ANP are much more successful than independent actions. POLICE IN THE LEAD; MILITARY SUPPORTING!
- Don't change how they fight – make how they fight better/more effective.
- If you do not fight next to them they will never respect you. If you fight next to them and prove your metal, they will do anything for



Lessons Learned: Afghanistan

- On border, war of isolated outposts against a mobile enemy employing guerrilla tactics.
  - Troops needed for interdiction
  - Insurgent sanctuaries denied
  - Speaks to the need for a Civil registry with Bio-metrics

“Paradoxes of COIN”

- **The more you protect your force, the less secure you are**
- **The more force you use, the less effective you are**
- **Sometimes doing nothing is the best reaction**
- **The best weapons for COIN don’t fire bullets**
- **Them doing something poorly,**

  is usually better than us doing it well
- **If a tactic works this week, it will not work next week;**

  if it works in this province, it will not work in the next
- **Tactical success guarantees nothing**

Afghanistan

- COIN is not about a kindler gentler soldier it is about understanding the environment in order gain the appropriate influence using the appropriate tools to gain support of the people.

Observations Brief

LTC Storm Savage

2009

"Tell me, I forget.

Show me, I learn.

Involve me, I understand."

Confucius

Observations (2009)

Question: What is it we do?

Answer: Help people

- **Afghan National Army (ANA)**
- **Afghan National Police (ANP)**
- **Afghan Border Police (ABP)**
- **Embedded Training Teams (ETT) and Police Mentor Teams (PMT)**
- **Coalition Forces (OMLTs)**
- **Other Governmental Agencies**
- **Citizens**
- **EVERYONE!**

Observations (2009)

- **The Afghans have learned to survive for 30 years of war by hedging their bets - that's why they play both sides.**
- **Don't just try to offend them less than the Taliban does – give them a reason to view their National Government in a positive light.**
- **Only about 2% have the will and ability to harm you – don't let that determine the way you treat the other 98%.**
- **The 12 or 16 years you spent in school learning how to read and write, they spent learning how to read people. By the time you actually know what is going on, they have already read you from cover to cover - that's why your commitment and genuine concern is so important.**
- **If you fake it you become a joke!**

Observations (2009)

- **Smile and wave like you're running for office.**
- **Understand that most of them can understand some English so don't belittle them.**
- **Realize that the difference between the cities and rural tribal areas is about 20**
- **Take off your sunglasses and talk to them…take the time ask them how things are go**
- **Never, ever, promise anythin**

Observations (2009)

- **You will only know what Afghans want you to know.**
- **The Afghans are genuinely interested in you.**
- **Afghans will eventually bring up religion. Don't be afraid to answer their questions.**
- **They will work with you because of the money and effects you bring. They will respect you for the man you are.**
- **Nothing is black and white; only different shades of grey. Learn to cut deals but remember, YOU ARE WHO YOU HOLD HANDS WITH!**

Observations (2009)

- **Afghans value their culture because they have had nothing else for so long. They will kill, fight, and die for honor, family, and religion.**

- **Example: You do not outright search houses. You cordon a village and ask the tribal or village elder to produce the suspect or that he allow you to search. Only if he gives you permission do you search.**

- **Note: Disregard this slide at your own peril. You "can" search the house or village but realize that one or more of your soldiers will pay for that search with his life. Honor is all the tribal or village elder has and you just took it from him. You didn't show him the proper respect in his world. How many of the tribe's sons is he willing to have die to get his honor back? The answer is "all of them" because he is powerless without his honor.**

Observations (2009)

Fighting

- **Find the sun; that is the direction the enemy will engage you. The insurgents will use the sun to their advantage. They will attack from the east in the morning and the west at night. This is a skill we have forgotten.**

- **It's easy to get in (to the border/mountain areas). The difficulty is getting out. Retrograde has to be part of your detailed planning. Vary the route if possible. If not (normally there is one road/trail in a valley), you have to drop off security elements on your way into the mountainous terrain along historical ambush sites in order to get back out again. A drain on manpower.**

Observations (2009)

Fighting

- **If your TTP for ambush involves leaving the kill zone and the Afghan Security Forces' is to dismount because they are in thin skinned vehicles, it is better to stay and lose life than break the bond between the Afghan force and the Coalition Force. You must have that level of commitment to the cause/indigenous force to even be respected enough to make a difference.**

- **CG 201st Corps (ANA) said, "All we had to do to beat the Russians was get them to leave. To beat me and my soldiers,**

Questions ?

Observations (2009)

Observation #1: **Recent experience has shown that most of the personnel that the MTTs and CLC-A have interacted with (and trained) do not utilize ASCOPE as a means of viewing and understanding the populace.**

(ASCOPE: Area, Structures, Capabilities, Organizations, People, Events)

Subject: ASCOPE, a tool to quantify and understand the populace and their environment

Discussion: The ASCOPE, as seen on the following slide of this brief, is an important tool for understanding a populace within the region that the ASCOPE is conducted. It quantifies the populace's environment and shows how each piece of the ASOPE makes up and influences the areas (populace) strengths and vulnerabilities. Even though we are seeing many units unknowingly taking parts of ASCOPE into consideration, utilizing the ASCOPE process in total, as a complete tool, gives the unit a much higher level of understanding (for mission planning) in what challenges are associated with their area of operation and areas of responsibility. CTC-A has identified this shortcoming, and in both the MTTs training and the CLC-A's classroom training, ASCOPE and its mission planning benefits are being greatly emphasized as a priority mission planning tool.

USE "ASCOPE" TO ANALYZE THE HUMAN TERRAIN "HUMIT"

ASCOPE (THE HUMAN TERRAIN "HUMIT")

- **Area:** Address terrain analysis from a civilian perspective
- **Structures:** How a structure's location, function, and capabilities can support or hinder operations
- **Capabilities:** Capabilities can refer to the ability key functions and services
- **Organizations:** Consider all nonmilitary groups or institutions in the area Cultural, Social, Religious
- **People:** All non military persons that military forces encounter in the AO
- **Events:** Events are routine, cyclical, planned, or spontaneous: activities that significantly affect organizations, people, and military operations

Assess each category from the perspective of the people, the insurgent, the counterinsurgent (this may require further definition into CF, ANA, ANP).

"Intellectual Center of the Army"

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COMISAF's COIN GUIDANCE

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- **COMISAF's Guidance**
- **How We Will Lose.**
- **How We Help the Afghan People Win!**

US Army and Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Center COIN

COMISAF's GUIDANCE

The Mission

Help the Afghan people defeat the insurgency threatening their country!

The Imperatives

- Help the Afghan people by securing them.
- Afghan people will decide who wins; we need *their* support!
- Change our culture: the way we think, act, and operate.
- Killing insurgents will not win their fight!

The Intent

- Gaining and maintaining Afghan support motivates

The ways we will lose

Separate ourselves from the Afghan people – literally *or* figuratively

The ways we will lose

Drive offensively and dangerously.

The ways we will lose

Destroy or undermine legal livelihoods.

The ways we will lose

Focus on militants, not the people.

The ways we will lose

Respond conventionally to unconventional

The ways we will lose

10 – 2 = 20+ *Counterinsurgency Math*

The ways we will lose

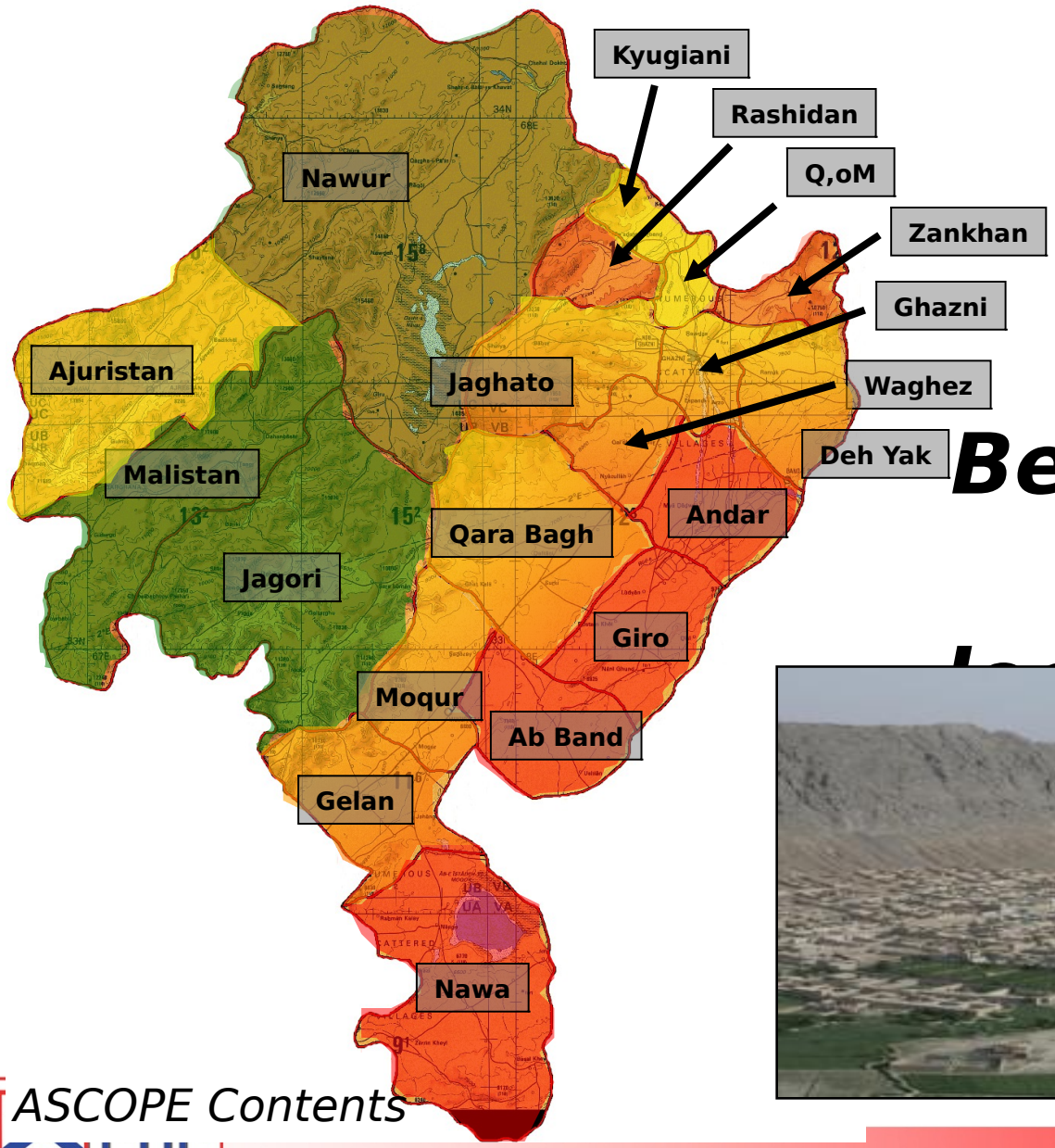
Clear, Hold, and ***Leave***

How we help the Afghan people win

Engage with the Afghan people as a key and essential task

How we help the Afghan people win

Build relationships, hold each other accountable, grow capacity,



Be an expert on the

ASCOPE Contents

How we help the Afghan people win

Seek out the underprivileged, disenfranchised, disaffected.

How we help the Afghan people win

Help reinvigorate Afghan tribal and community structures

How we help the Afghan people win

Respond to Afghan thoughts, insights, and recommendations

How we help the Afghan people win

Encourage and support good, accountable governance

for the people

Questions ?